

L E T T E R

FROM

Mrs. STRAIGHTFORWARD to her Son TIMMY.

To which is prefixed,

MRS. STRAIGHTFORWARD'S LETTER

TO THE

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN OF CAMBRIDGE.

Haud ignara mali, miseris succedere disco.—Vir. Æn.

*I'm asham'd to repeat what he said in the sequel,
Aspersions so cruel as nothing can equal,
I declare I am shock'd such a fellow should vex,
And spread all these lies of the innocent sex.*

BATH GUIDE.

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MRS. STRAIGHTFORWARD

TO THE

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

OF

CAMBRIDGE.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

THERE are few that will not allow with me that *children* are naturally *obstinate*; the experience I must have had, during the course of so long a life, is a confirmation of what I once doubted; and the plague and trouble I have had with my son TIMMY convinces me he is not the least of those *obstinate children*; many a tear have I shed for him, and *particularly* lamented that he should have so *just* a resemblance of the most *insensible* animals in his nature, without possessing the least of their good qualities; for like a *mule* or an *ass*, all that an affectionate fond mother can say, cannot turn him from that *dangerous rugged* path he has taken; and so *senseless* is his *skin*

of *feeling*, that nothing but the *severest beating* can have effect; and though this *obstinacy* is peculiar to TIM, and an *afs*, I never yet heard that an *afs*, in the same *senseless* manner that he tramps the road, ever run through an *whole* neighbourhood, and *kicked indiscriminately* every one that *ventured* out of doors.

Amidst other misfortunes, I think it lamentable that *children*, whose youth and *insignificancy* cannot furnish them with sufficient *strength* either for *attack* or *defence*, that they are the most *exposed* to danger, and it seems to me as if it was natural for them to run into quite the *reverse* from what they should; bad company is a poyson, is death to a *child*. O how have I talked to TIM on that subject! But regardless of every admonition, that cursed *harlot*, the Muse, O that they had not half the beauty they possess! drags him away I know not whither; I'm afraid she'll make a *fool of him at last*. Now, my dear ladies, of you, to whom my son has unprovoked been guilty of the most *shameful* treatment, for him I beg ten thousand pardons. Do not be offended with what my *child* has *ignorantly* and
foolishly

foolishly said; but I beseech you rather pity his *childhood*, and despise the poyson of an *impotent* snake; for if when he returns home, I should *whip* him for his ill usage, his skin can never retain the mark, and I give you in *justice* this *public* letter, since all my *private* admonitions have failed. And expecting an *undutiful* answer, I leave it to your candour to determine, if I have not in the *following* epistle, by my advice to him, displayed the kindness of an anxious, affectionate mother.

L E T T E R

F R O M

M R S. S T R A I G H T F O R W A R D.

JUST come from a visit, dear *Tim*, to other night,
Your *second* epistle occur'd to my sight:

Having read the contents, (as an anxious fond mother

Gives better advice to her son than another)

Thus I, if my *fears* with my wishes agree,

Will give my *best* counsel, dear Timmy, to thee;

For I fear lest the *Muse*, with her *beautiful* face,

Should lead thee, perhaps, to some *dangerous* place.

As much as your mother remembers of *Latin*,

To rhyme like yourself, here's a verse will come *pat* in:

B

For

For she's bound to declare what some poet has writ,

Poeta, aye, *nascitur*: what follows, *non fit* ?

For heavens, dear Tim, if you must then *compose*,

Break off with your *Muses*, and joke in your *prose*.

Amidst your "*B. D's*," 'tis a *Laureat*" you court,

But if they *should* crown you, they'll crown you in *sport*;

And you envy to *fear* "on the *birth-day of Kings*:"

Won't a *pigmy* suffice your *poetical* wings?

For you know, my dear Tim, that the *higher* you fly,

The *greater* the fall, and the *surer* to die.

Remember the *mighty* endeavours of Bell.*

When a poor little fly sent him groaning to Hell:

Thus mortals will *fall*, that aspire to be *great*,

When they cannot arrive at the mark they'd be at.

But

Mrs. Straightforward hopes Timmy will excuse the word Bell. for Bellerophon. She has taken that poetical liberty from the 45th line of his epistle, "The dowager Mus. for —."

But just let me make, and forgive a " digression,
 " 'Tis like M——n's discourse, to display my profession ;"
 And " as herbs to gain families" certainly *suff.*†
 Why I think of a *poppy*, the hint is enough.

Now excuse your dear mother, who wishes you well,
 Nor think her too *harsh*, though your *failings* she tell;
 She does it, my child, not to check your *ambition*,
 But to drive your poor mule from the road of perdition ;
 And first she remarks that your muse is *too free*,
 That it meddles with *those* who ne'er meddled with *thee* :
 Again she must own, to the grief of her heart,
 That you seem to have taken a *cowardly* part,
 For you *fight* with the *women*, which adds to her pain,
 Since the women can never return it again.

But

Mrs. Straightforward has taken one more liberty, *suff.* pro *suffice*.—See 45th line of the
 ad epistle, Mus. pro M——.

But hold (my dear Tim) for sure history saith
 They were *women* that tore the poor ORPHEUS to death;
 And you have *no* chance, since your writings agree,
 You're not so well skill'd for *defending* as *he*.
 And again, *what* all authors soever agree on,
 One woman alone prov'd a *death* to ACTÆON.
 Besides, little LOVE takes so busy a part,
 And his bow is so constantly bent for an heart,
 That surely he's wounded one virgin or more
 Of the whole tribe of ladies your pen has run o'er;
 And if that is the case, my dear Timmy, beware—
 A lover *enrag'd* never *vaunts* in the air,
 But he's *fix'd* on his purpose; methinks I can see
 The *pistol* brought forward, and levell'd at thee;
 For who can forbear, when an *ill-natur'd* name
 Impos'd *without justice* shall point him to Fame?

But

But how could you think to make *A*st*y* your master?

He's a *poet*, and you but a—*small poetaster*:

Whoe'er in *his* stile is not found to succeed

(So odd is *his* verse) must be shocking indeed.

But pray now excuse, for I must be so free,

As to say in what matters we yet disagree.

And now (my dear Tim) though you rang'd through the pots,

It could hardly suggest the idea of *cots*;

How horrid the fight, and my blood it now rouzes,

For folks to be kill'd, and *stuck up* in their houses,

And I'm still in a fright, for *O* see how *she* looks,

'Twas an opportune verse to bring in the Miss *C**ks*;

And from hence I suppose when you see Mrs. *H*dgf*n*,

You gain an idea of what is a *godson*;

C

And

And by seeing Miss Bl*ts*e and good Mrs. F*sh*r,
 I'm surpriz'd you should think of an *old fashion'd dish* here;
 And yet 'tis as odd you should introduce *speakers*
 Like so many old fashion'd *odd-colour'd beakers* :
 And yet, sure the sense is *amazingly full*,
 I see nothing else that we want but a —*bull* :
 But hold : a rude monster, *I don't know, perhaps*,
 But he'll make, if let loose, dreadful work with the *caps*,
 And then I should fear, though “*she's vastly genteel*,
 Left he drive to this corner *my dear Mrs. St**l*.
 But away with this bull for a creature that's *pretty*,
 I scarce hear the name, but I hear the word *witty*;
 And now for the raffle ; you've *lost all your money* ;
 I wish with yourself, I could say it was *funny* !
 And therefore suppose that since this is the case,
 You publish'd your letter in hopes to—*replace*.

Well;

Well; if you *will* write, and I cannot dissuade,
 Accept a few rules I've inclos'd for *the trade*;
 With *modesty* first you should set out a poet,
 And if you will *lash, lash* and seem not to know it;
 Again for the world never mention a *name*,
 Two *letters* and *crosses* should fill up the same;
 Next *expletives*, Tim, in my budget I've got,
 Such as *er*, such as *did*, with *all*, *never*, and *not*,
 Thus saying, *my father my brother has chid*,
 Take your expletives there, *so—he—did,—so—he—did*.
 And if you've occasion to *finish with speed*,
 There's no such a word to be found as—*indeed*.
 But here I must close; and to what I have done,
 Add, I cannot suppose I'm "in *debt* to my son."
 This one thing alone, *that your verses were borrow'd*,
 Can please your unhappy

VERETTA STRAIGHTFORWARD.

Hah!

Hah! Timmy, well; like you I'll change my *mode*,
 You've set th' example by your *laureat* ode;
 I cannot bear such *barren, fruitless* stuff;
 What think you Tim? There's *simile* enough?
 Why not an *epithet*? That's now and then;
 It shews an *elegant*, an *able* pen;
 God bless me! poets with but *half* a frown,
 Should see the *world* and turn it *upside down*;
 But you, alas! can scarcely *move the tear*,
 Much less *dry up* the sorrows of despair.
 Come, Timmy, come, with *simile*, I say,
 And *epithet* in *piles* we'll pave the way:
 Then shall you own that my addition's *great*,
 And yours without it loses half its weight.

AN

VERITTA STRAIGHTFORWARD.

[21]

A N O D E
FOR THE
ANNIVERSARY MEETING
OF THE
GOVERNORS OF ADDENBROOKE'S HOSPITAL.

Revised and corrected by Mrs. Straightforward, because she thinks her son Timmy has been deficient in drawing the portrait of a *miserable* wretch; she has made additions, and leaves it to the public to determine whether she has not added a more striking picture of the distressed HUNGREDO.

1st Verse.

“ I MPATIENT waiting for the awful sound”

(*Like many an half-starv'd; hungry, beaten hound*)

“ Of Fate's dread summons to relieve his woes,

“ The weary mortal throws his eyes around,”

That is to see what BONES are to be found,

“ And begs that Death his wretched life may close.”

II.

" On sharp Affliction's flinty bed,"

The stones are fit to cut him dead,

" Distrest, forlorn, he gasping lies;

" Disease still hovers o'er his head,"

He cannot get a bit of bread,

For " Fate the wish'd-for boon denies !"

III.

" The pangs of Poverty distract his soul !

" Tormenting horrors through his spirits roll,"

As marbles driven by a bouncing pole,

" Scarce able Life's afflicting weight to bear,

" He mourns, he pines, he lingers with despair!"

He pants, he groans, and throws his legs into the air.

IV.

IV.

“ Who shall relieve the wretch's care ?”

As lean as any dancing bear,

“ What heart-reviving friend is near,

“ To calm the tumult in his breast,

To pop him in some raven's nest,

“ And hush his troubles into rest.”

V.

“ A stream of anguish bursts through rocks of sighs,”

No better living skeleton a surgeon buys,

“ His heart o'erwhelms, and drowns his care-shrunk cheek,

“ Whilst murm'ring torrents, which successive rise,

“ The torture of his soul bespeak.”

And say he has not tasted victuals for a week.

VI.

VI.

“ He weeps, but weeps not long in vain,

“ For PITY warms the human breast!”

Old Belzeb. gone, he's now at rest.

“ The pearly blessing starting from her eye

“ Lulls into peace the melancholy sigh;”

The tears are gone, and so—his eyes are dry,

“ Benevolence, celestial maid,

“ Extends her sorrow soothing aid,”

Though flyly weeping for the rino paid,

“ Plenty relieves where Penury opprest,

“ And Charity alleviates the pain.”

And poor HUNGREDO stands upon his legs again.

VII.

VII.

“ Rouze then to songs of grateful joy”

(Come hither yonder little boy)

“ The sleeping lyre’s harmonious string,

“ Extend your voices through the yielding sky,”

We’ll set up such a dismal cry,

We’ll make the earth and all its caverns ring.

VIII.

“ Awake the harp, attune the lute,

“ Breathe in soft strains the melting flute,”

And drive away HUNGREDO’s disappointed MUTE.

IX.

In drunken frolic and in one concordant breath,

HUNGREDO with us shall rejoice we conquer’d Death.

F I N I S.

THIRD LETTER

"Rouse them to songs of grateful joy"

(Come hither, ye little boys)

And the laughing lyre's harmonious string

"Extend your voices through the yielding air"

New feelings such a hymn may

Well make the earth and all its creatures ring



VIII

"Awake the harp, attend the lute"

"Breathe in soft strains the melting flute"

And drive away the gloom of disappointed Mute

IX

In drunken frolic and in carousal break

Hungered with small joys we cannot break

